UNITED
NATIONS

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Economic and Social Council

Distr.
LIMITED

E/C.7/1994/L.8
3 March 1994

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES
Second session
22 February-4 March 1994
Agenda item 6

LEGISLATIVE AND INSTITUTIONAL ASPECTS OF WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Draft resolution submitted by the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Mr. D. A. Davis (Canada), on the basis of informal consultations

The Committee on Natural Resources recommends to the Economic and Social Council the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Integrated water resources management

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 32/158 of 19 December 1977, in which the Assembly approved the Mar del Plata Action Plan, 1/

Recalling also General Assembly resolution 45/181 of 21 December 1990 on the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade,

Recalling further the recommendations related to water, contained in Agenda 21, adopted by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, 2/

1/ Report of the United Nations Water Conference, Mar del Plata, 14-25 March 1977 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.77.II.A.12), chap. I.

2/ Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992, vol. I, Resolutions Adopted by the Conference (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex II.

1. Urges Governments to assign the highest priority to the establishment of a dynamic, interactive, iterative and multisectoral approach to water resources management for sustainable development, including the assessment and protection of potential sources of freshwater, as an essential precondition for the implementation of the recommendations contained in chapter 18 of Agenda 21;

2. Requests the organs and organizations of the United Nations system that are active in the field of water resources to continue to provide assistance to Governments, at their request, in carrying out national diagnostic assessments of water resources and institutional capabilities and in formulating strategies and action plans for the management of land and water resources for sustainable development;

3. Requests the Secretary-General, in close collaboration with the regional commissions and the United Nations specialized agencies and bodies, through the Subcommittee on Water Resources of the Administrative Committee on Coordination, to assemble global information on the seriousness of the water resources crisis and to identify future information needs and performance indicators which could be used to evaluate progress;

4. Requests each of the regional commissions to submit to the Committee on Natural Resources at its third session a regional report on progress made and issues arising in the implementation of the recommendations of the Mar del Plata Action Plan and the water-related recommendations of Agenda 21, including case-studies available from Governments in their respective regions, in accordance with a general outline to be developed jointly with the secretariat of the Committee on Natural Resources;

5. Requests the Secretary-General, using the reports requested in paragraph 4 above and in consultation with the specialized agencies, to submit to the Committee on Natural Resources at its third session a synthesis report on the state of the world's freshwater resources, as part of the ongoing follow-up to Agenda 21;

6. Requests the Secretary-General to prepare a report on institutional issues in water resources management for submission to the Committee on Natural Resources at its third session, which would focus on:

(a) Organizational, administrative and managerial structures for the integrated management of water resources for sustainable development, specific attention to be paid to countries in tropical and water-scarce areas;

(b) Water-pricing practices;

(c) Identification of institutional barriers to integrated land and water resources management;

(d) Community participation, including the participation of women, in integrated water resources management;

7. Calls upon the Subcommittee on Water Resources of the Administrative Committee on Coordination to provide strategic and policy support in the development of the implementation plan to avert the impending water crisis;

8. Decides that at its organizational session in 1995 the coordination and integration of water- and land-related activities will be considered as an item for the agenda of the coordination segment of the Economic and Social Council in 1995 with a view to ensuring that the appropriate core strategic and policy expertise is available within the United Nations system to address freshwater issues.